

050947Z Mar 02

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ACTION AF-00

INFO LOG-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EUR-00 UTED-00 TEDE-00 INR-00
NSAE-00 PA-00 PRS-00 SP-00 TEST-00 USIE-00 IIP-00
DRL-02 SAS-00 /002W

-----6FBC97 051502Z /45

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1094
INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX AND ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR KRAFT AND SCHLACHTER,
AF/RA FOR SWANN, INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ZI](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ZIM PRESIDENTIAL POLL; HARARE

1. IN THE FINAL WEEK OF ZIMBABWE'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION,
MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO DEVOTE THEIR EDITORIALS,
AND MUCH OF THEIR NEWS COVERAGE, TO THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.
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EXCERPTS FOLLOW:

2. UNDER THE HEADLINE "MESSAGE THAT MUST REACH ALL
VILLAGERS," THE INDEPENDENT "DAILY NEWS" ON MARCH 5
EXPRESSED ITS DISPLEASURE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH FAILED TO
SUSPEND THE MUGABE REGIME "FOR ITS BLATANT DISREGARD FOR
INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED NORMS OF CIVILIZED GOVERNANCE."
EXCERPTS:

"IT CAN BE PLAUSIBLY ARGUED THAT, EVEN IF IT HAD
SUCCEEDED, THE FAILED ATTEMPT TO SUSPEND ZIMBABWE FROM
THE COMMONWEALTH WAS UNLIKELY TO ACHIEVE MUCH IN
PERSUADING PRESIDENT MUGABE TO STOP THE VIOLENCE HIS
PARTY IS USING COUNTRYWIDE TO FORCE PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR
HIM THIS COMING WEEKEND ANYWAY. NEVERTHELESS, WE CANNOT
PRETEND THAT THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE DO NOT FEEL TERRIBLY
LET DOWN BY THE COMMONWEALTH. . .EFFORTS BY THE EUROPEAN
UNION AND THE UNITED STATES TO REIN IN OUR ROGUE
GOVERNMENT ARE CERTAINLY COMMENDABLE. BUT THEY CAN ONLY
ACHIEVE SO MUCH AND NO MORE. IT IS NOW LEFT TO
ZIMBABWEANS THEMSELVES TO DELIVER THEMSELVES FROM EVIL.
AND THEIR ONLY WEAPON IS THEIR VOTE. . . ."

3. UNDER HEADLINE "WE DO NOT NEED A SURROGATE PRESIDENT,
"THE BULAWAYO-BASED GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED DAILY "CHRONICLE"
DECLARED IN ITS MARCH 5 EDITORIAL THAT ZIMBABWE DOES NOT
NEED "WHITE MAN" TO RUN THE COUNTRY. EXCERPTS:

". . .VOTING FOR THE OPPOSITION ON 9 AND 10 MARCH WILL
CONDEMN US TO CARRYING (WHITE MAN) ACROSS THE RIVER TO
SELL OUR DIAMONDS AND GOLD. . .THEREFORE WE DO NOT NEED
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THEM FOR AN IMPORTANT JOB AS RUNNING THE COUNTRY. EVEN
MORE IMPORTANT, WE DO NOT NEED A SURROGATE PRESIDENT WHO
WILL ALWAYS REMIND US, WHEN HE HAS SOLD EVERYTHING
INCLUDING HIS SOUL, THAT 'BUT YOU VOTED FOR ME.'"

4. UNDER THE HEADLINE "SAY NO TO WESTERN MANIPULATION,"
THE
BULAWAYO-BASED GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY "SUNDAY NEWS"
ENCOURAGED ZIMBABWEANS, IN ITS MARCH 3 EDITORIAL TO VOTE
FOR PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE IN ORDER TO "REASSERT"
ZIMBABWE AS "AFRICA'S LEADING VOICE AGAINST WESTERN
MANIPULATION." EXCERPTS:

"ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, ZIMBABWEANS WILL VOTE IN AN
EPOCH-MAKING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. PAN-AFRICANISTS AND
OTHER PROGRESSIVE FORCES WORLDWIDE AGREE THAT THIS
ELECTION IS REALLY A TIME TO DECIDE WHETHER ZIMBABWE
SHOULD REASSERT ITSELF AS AFRICA'S LEADING VOICE AGAINST
WESTERN MANIPULATION OR RETURN TO THE DARK DAYS OF

COLONIAL SERVITUDE."

SULLIVAN

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